



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG

RICK KRISEMAN, MAYOR

**MEMORANDUM**  
**City of St. Petersburg**

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Rick Kriseman, Mayor  
**DATE:** 12/04/2019  
**RE:** Tampa Bay Rays Update

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As I have received several inquiries related to the Tampa Bay Rays and their future in St. Petersburg, I wanted to provide you with the following written update.

Negotiations between the City of St. Petersburg and the Tampa Bay Rays Organization related to the 'shared season' concept have concluded. Both parties have agreed that the best path forward is to abide by the existing use agreement with the understanding that the agreement allows for the Rays Organization to explore post-2027 split or full season opportunities, both in St. Petersburg and elsewhere.

In accordance with the existing use agreement, should the Rays Organization wish to continue exploration of the shared season concept with Montreal, that exploration must be limited to the 2028 season and beyond.

Please also know that team officials have declined my offer, made in the spirit of regionalism, to renew the recent Memorandum of Understanding that had allowed the Rays to explore future 'full-time' stadium locations throughout the Tampa Bay Region, including Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa.

As you know, team officials first began contemplating future stadium locations in St. Pete twelve years ago. With only eight seasons remaining under the use agreement, the Rays will need to decide on their future soon, as it will take several seasons to finalize a future site and build a stadium either here in St. Petersburg or elsewhere.

As I stated earlier this year, while the City of St. Petersburg is willing to discuss contributing to the funding for a new stadium for a full-time team here in St. Petersburg, we will not contribute public dollars to construct a stadium for a part-time team.

As such, with no imminent discussions pending regarding a new stadium for a full-time team, we will begin to evaluate our next steps in redeveloping at least parts of the site following additional public engagement.

I continue to believe that the Rays Organization will come to determine that the Tampa Bay Area, and specifically St. Pete, remains the best place to play baseball 81 days a year and to succeed in the long-

term. The growth and vibrancy in the Sunshine City, and particularly in the area surrounding Tropicana Field, signals a bright future for that site. A strengthening television market and record revenues across Major League Baseball only further solidify my belief.

As the Rays now appear to be shifting their focus to 2028, I want to encourage each of you, and all residents and fans of the team, to continue to focus on the field and cheer for one of baseball's best teams. The recent playoff games at Tropicana Field were a reminder that sports teams and events have the power to bring people together. Given St. Pete's rich history with baseball and the trajectory of our city, I remain confident that we will be rooting for the Tampa Bay Rays for generations to come.

cc: Kanika Tomalin, Deputy Mayor/City Administrator  
Tom Greene, Assistant City Administrator  
Jaqueline Kovilaritch, City Attorney  
Alan DeLisle, City Development Administrator  
Kevin King, Chief of Policy & Public Engagement